

Vanessa Short Bull is an extraordinary woman who richly deserves this distinguished recognition. I strongly commend her years of hard work and dedication, and I am very pleased that her substantial efforts are being publicly honored and celebrated. I wish her the best at the Miss America competition, and it is with great honor that I share her impressive accomplishments with my colleagues.●

#### CHARACTER COUNTS AND ALBUQUERQUE'S SEPTEMBER 11 COMMEMORATION

● Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise today to highlight the contributions of a community, dedicated to the spirit of the Character Counts education movement, in its commemoration of the first anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks on our Nation.

The Nation as a whole this week took time to honor the victims, salute our military men and women fighting the war on terrorism, and reaffirm our faith and belief in our great Nation. New Mexico communities joined in this effort, not least among them our largest city, Albuquerque.

I rise today to highlight Albuquerque's tribute because it fused the nearly decade-long effort to build character education into the day-to-day life of the city with the community's desire to commemorate September 11.

This week, some 4,200 Albuquerque school children simultaneously released helium-filled balloons as part of a "Character Counts Soaring Spirits Salute" to commemorate September 11. This balloon launch gave the students a chance to honor the people who lost their lives in last year's terrorist attacks.

But the Character Counts rally had a second purpose. We designed this balloon launch to lead into the celebration of National Character Week. Supporters of the Character Counts initiative hope this will become a yearly observance built around September 11, and the purpose of the week is to celebrate the acts of kindness and courage we see in our communities every single day.

The Character Counts Soaring Spirits Salute involved some outstanding New Mexico community leaders and business owners who worked together to make this event happen, and serve as evidence of a community working together to improve itself by promoting the tenets of good character. I am proud to say these are people who routinely rally behind our youth.

I believe some deserve to be singled out, including: the New Mexico State Fair; Excel Staffing Companies; MCI; Albuquerque Public Schools, (APS); KISS-FM; Public Service Company of New Mexico; Valley Distributing; Greg Cook Productions; Dave Garduño of Garduño's Restaurants; as well as the men and women of the 58th Special Operations Wing and the New Mexico National Guard of Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque.

A measure of gratitude is also owed to a number of individuals, including: Gabe Garcia and Chris Montaño of Duranes Elementary School; Judi Preston of Video Wizard; Eric Hampleman of Simmons Media; Steve Stucker of KOB-TV; Bill Wood of KRQE-TV; Bruce Bortner and Ed O'Leary of the Albuquerque Character Counts Leadership Council; Carole Smith of APS; Terry Eisenbart of Southwest Airlines, who sponsored State Fair festivities for the day.

I am very fortunate to represent a community like Albuquerque where I know we can always count on daily acts of Respect, Responsibility, Trustworthiness, Citizenship, Fairness and Caring. Those are the pillars of Character Counts, and it's why today I congratulate and I deeply thank my neighbors in New Mexico for their daily acts of kindness, courage, and character as we mark our progress as a nation and a united community a year after the terrible attacks on our Nation.●

#### TRIBUTE TO JOHNNY UNITAS

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, it is with sadness that I rise today to pay tribute to a man who passed away too soon, the Man with the Golden Arm, the great Baltimore Colt, Hall of Famer Johnny Unitas. He was known to many as the greatest quarterback to ever play in the National Football League. Yet to those of us in Baltimore and Maryland, he was our own Johnny U. He was the man who put professional football on the national map, who embodied the strong spirit of our city and State.

Johnny Unitas was born in Pittsburgh, but he spent most of his life in Baltimore. He was as much a part of the fabric of the city as crab cakes and Cal Ripken.

After high school, he wanted to play football in college at the University of Notre Dame. Yet the coaches there told him he was too small to play football. Johnny wound up playing at the University of Louisville, and was drafted in 1955 by his hometown Pittsburgh Steelers. The Steelers promptly cut him from the team before the 1955 season started, telling him that he wasn't smart enough to be a quarterback.

Pittsburgh's loss was Baltimore's gain. The Baltimore Colts signed him in 1956, and the rest is history. In 1958, he led the Colts to an improbable victory in the NFL Championship Game against the New York Giants, a game that is now referred to as "The Greatest Ever Played." Unitas engineered the famous 80-yard game-tying drive with less than 2 minutes to play in regulation, then led the Colts to victory in overtime. This was the first overtime game ever played in the NFL. The legend of Johnny Unitas was soon born.

His trademark crew-cut and black high-top cleats were copied by boys all over Baltimore, Maryland, and the entire country. Every kid wanted to be number 19.

His toughness was legendary. Many times he played with broken bones, through unbearable pain. The words he said to his teammates before every game embodied his spirit: "Talk is cheap, let's go play."

His accomplishments are too numerous to mention, but among them are these: 3-time Player of the Year; 3-time NFL Champion; first quarterback to pass for over 40,000 yards; a touchdown pass in 47 consecutive games, a feat which is compared to Joe DiMaggio's 56-game hitting streak; 10 Pro Bowl selections; Player of the Decade for the 1960's; Greatest Player in the First 50 Years of the NFL; NFL 75th Anniversary Team; and Hall of Fame Inductee, 1979. When he retired in 1973, Johnny Unitas held 22 NFL records.

It is not just his accomplishments on the field that endeared him to the fans in Baltimore. He was an unassuming superstar, a reluctant hero, a regular guy who happened to be a tremendous athlete. He understood that a smile or a handshake or an autograph could make a fan's day.

He was generous with charities, too, even as he fell upon difficult financial times. He established the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Educational Foundation, and supported various organizations dedicated to children's causes, cancer research, and victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.

Johnny Unitas was the underdog who became the greatest quarterback in the history of the National Football League. Yet beyond that, he was a fine person who will be sorely missed, not only in Baltimore and Maryland, but across the country. My thoughts and prayers are with his family, his friends, and his many, many fans.●

#### EXPULSION OF THE ACADIANS

● Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, I rise today to address the injustices the British Crown inflicted upon the Acadian people over 200 years ago. Due to their refusal to take an oath of loyalty to the King of Great Britain that would require them to bear arms against their French ancestors, the British governor exiled them from their homes and confiscated their property in Eastern Canada beginning in 1755.

This action caused great suffering among the Acadian people as they struggled to find a new home. Forced from their homes, many left for the American colonies. Ultimately, a small group of Acadians found their way to the Spanish colony of Louisiana in 1764. In the next twenty-five years, over 2,600 made the journey to Louisiana.

These refugees ultimately settled in Louisiana and created the Cajun culture which has so richly influenced Louisiana since that time. While Louisiana culture benefited greatly from the Acadian expulsion, the suffering of the Acadian people must never be forgotten.